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DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

Applications for New Awards; Personnel Development to Improve Services and Results for Children with Disabilities--Preparation of Special Education, Early Intervention, and Related Services Leadership Personnel

AGENCY: Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services, Department of Education.

ACTION: Notice.

SUMMARY: The Department of Education is issuing a notice inviting applications for new awards for fiscal year (FY) 2018 for Personnel Development to Improve Services and Results for Children with Disabilities--Preparation of Special Education, Early Intervention, and Related Services Leadership Personnel, Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance (CFDA) number 84.325D.

DATES:

Applications Available: [INSERT DATE OF PUBLICATION IN THE FEDERAL REGISTER].

Deadline for Transmittal of Applications: [INSERT DATE 45 DAYS AFTER DATE OF PUBLICATION IN THE FEDERAL REGISTER].

Deadline for Intergovernmental Review: [INSERT DATE 105 DAYS AFTER DATE OF PUBLICATION IN THE FEDERAL REGISTER].

ADDRESSES: For the addresses for obtaining and submitting an application, please refer to our Common Instructions for Applicants to Department of Education Discretionary Grant Programs, published in the *Federal Register* on February 12, 2018 (83 FR 6003) and available at

www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/FR-2018-02-12/pdf/2018-02558.pdf.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Celia Rosenquist, U.S. Department of Education, 400 Maryland Avenue, SW., room 5146, Potomac Center Plaza, Washington, DC 20202-5076.

Telephone: (202) 245-7373.

If you use a telecommunications device for the deaf (TDD) or a text telephone (TTY), call the Federal Relay Service (FRS), toll free, at 1-800-877-8339.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Full Text of Announcement

I. Funding Opportunity Description

Purpose of Program: The purposes of this program are to

(1) help address State-identified needs for personnel preparation in special education, early intervention, related services, and regular education to work with children, including infants and toddlers, with disabilities; and (2) ensure that those personnel have the necessary skills and knowledge, derived from practices that

have been determined through scientifically based research and experience, to be successful in serving those children.

Priorities: This competition includes two absolute priorities and one competitive preference priority. In accordance with 34 CFR 75.105(b)(2)(v), Absolute Priority 1 is from allowable activities specified in the statute (see sections 662 and 681 of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA); 20 U.S.C. 1462 and 1481). Absolute Priority 2 and the competitive preference priority are from the Secretary's Final Supplemental Priorities and Definitions for Discretionary Grant Programs, published in the *Federal Register* on March 2, 2018 (83 FR 9096) (Supplemental Priorities).

Absolute Priorities: For FY 2018 and any subsequent year in which we make awards from the list of unfunded applications from this competition, these priorities are absolute priorities. Under 34 CFR 75.105(c)(3), we consider only applications that meet these priorities.

These priorities are:

Absolute Priority 1--Preparation of Special Education, Early Intervention, and Related Services Leadership Personnel.

Background:

The mission of the Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services (OSERS) is to improve early childhood, educational, and employment outcomes and raise expectations for all people with disabilities, their families, their communities, and the Nation.

The purpose of this Preparation of Special Education, Early Intervention, and Related Services Leadership Personnel competition is to support existing doctoral degree programs that prepare special education, early intervention, and related services personnel who are well-qualified for, and can act effectively in, leadership positions as researchers and preparers of special education, early intervention, and related services personnel in institutions of higher education (IHEs), or as leaders in national organizations, State educational agencies (SEAs), lead agencies (LAs), local educational agencies (LEAs), early intervention services programs (EIS programs), or schools. Absolute Priority 1 is consistent with the Supplemental Priorities, specifically, Supplemental Priority 5--Meeting the Unique Needs of Students and Children With Disabilities and/or Those with Unique Gifts and Talents; and Supplemental Priority 8--Promoting Effective Instruction in Classrooms and Schools.

There is a well-documented need for leadership

personnel to fill faculty and leadership positions in special education, early intervention, and related services (Castillo, Curtis, & Tan, 2014; deBettencourt, Hoover, Rude, & Taylor, 2016; Montrosse & Young, 2012; Robb, Smith, & Montrosse, 2012; Smith, Montrosse, Robb, Tyler, & Young, 2011; Smith, Robb, West, & Tyler, 2010; Woods & Snyder, 2009). These leaders conduct research to increase the knowledge of effective interventions and services for children, including infants and toddlers, and youth with disabilities. These leaders also teach practices supported by evidence to future special education, early intervention, related services, and regular education professionals who will work in a variety of educational settings and provide services directly to these children (Robb et al., 2012; Smith et al., 2010; West & Hardman, 2012). Shortages in these leadership positions limit the field's capacity to generate new knowledge of effective interventions and to prepare future professionals to improve outcomes for children with disabilities (Smith et al., 2011). In addition, leadership shortages limit the field's capacity to ensure that children, including infants and toddlers, and youth with disabilities have the opportunity to meet challenging objectives and receive an educational program that is both meaningful and

appropriately ambitious, which is essential for preparing them for future success.

Shortages of leadership personnel at State and local agencies to fill special education and early intervention administrator positions have also been noted (Billingsley, Crockett, & Kamman, 2014). These administrators supervise and evaluate the implementation of instructional programs supported by evidence to make sure that State or local agencies are meeting the needs of children with disabilities. Administrators also ensure that schools and programs meet Federal, State, and local requirements for special education, early intervention, and related services (Lashley & Boscardin, 2003).

Federal support can increase the supply of personnel who have the necessary knowledge and skills to assume leadership positions in special education, early intervention, and related services as researchers and preparers of special education, early intervention, related services, and regular education personnel in IHEs, or as leaders in national organizations, SEAs, LAs, LEAs, EIS programs, or schools. Critical competencies for special education, early intervention, and related services personnel vary depending on the type of leadership personnel and the requirements of the preparation program

but can include, for example, skills needed for postsecondary instruction, administration, policy development, professional practice, leadership, or research. However, all leadership personnel need to have current knowledge of effective interventions and services that improve outcomes for children with disabilities, including high-need children with disabilities. This knowledge should be applicable to children served in a variety of educational settings (e.g., public schools, including charter schools, or private schools) or early childhood and early intervention settings (e.g., home, community-based, Early Head Start and Head Start, child care, or public and private preschools), and the interventions and services must include those that promote literacy development, literacy skills, or other skills critical for college and today's careers.

Priority:

The purpose of this priority is to support existing doctoral degree programs that prepare special education, early intervention, and related services personnel at the doctoral degree level who are well qualified for, and can act effectively in, leadership positions as researchers and preparers of special education, early intervention, related services, and regular education personnel in IHEs, or as

leaders in national organizations, SEAs, LAs, LEAs, or EIS programs. This priority supports two types of programs:

Type A programs are designed to prepare special education, early intervention, and related services personnel as researchers and preparers of personnel in IHEs. Type A programs culminate in a doctoral degree.

Note: Preparation programs that lead to clinical doctoral degrees in related services (e.g., a Doctor of Audiology degree or Doctor of Physical Therapy degree) are not included in this priority. These types of preparation programs are eligible to apply for funding under the Personnel Preparation in Special Education, Early Intervention, and Related Services priority (CFDA 84.325K) that the Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP) intends to fund in FY 2018.

Type B programs are designed to prepare special education or early intervention administrators to work as leaders in national organizations, SEAs, LAs, LEAs, or EIS programs. Type B programs prepare personnel for positions such as SEA special education administrators, LEA or regional special education directors, school-based special education directors, preschool coordinators, and early intervention coordinators. Type B programs culminate in a doctoral degree.

Note: OSEP intends to fund in FY 2018 at least seven high-quality applications proposing Type B programs and may fund applications out of rank order. These applications must be of high quality and should score higher than 84 on a 100-point scale, exclusive of competitive preference points, in the technical review.

Note: The preparation of school principals is not included in this priority.

Note: Applicants must identify the specific program type, A or B, for which they are applying for funding as part of the abstract. Applicants may not submit the same proposal for more than one program type.

To be considered for funding under this absolute priority, program applicants must meet the application requirements contained in the priority. All projects funded under this absolute priority also must meet the programmatic and administrative requirements specified in the priority.

The requirements of this priority are as follows:

(a) Demonstrate, in the narrative section of the application under "Significance of the Project," how--

(1) The project addresses the need for leadership personnel to provide, prepare others to provide, or supervise the provision of effective interventions and

services that improve outcomes for children with disabilities, including high-need children with disabilities.¹ These interventions should be applicable to children served in a variety of educational settings (e.g., public schools, including charter schools, or private schools) or early childhood and early intervention settings (e.g., home, community-based, Early Head Start and Head Start, child care, or public and private preschools), and the interventions and services must include those that promote literacy development, literacy skills, or other skills critical for college and today's careers. To address this requirement, the applicant must present--

(i) Appropriate and applicable data (e.g., national, State) demonstrating the need for the leadership personnel the applicant proposes to prepare; and

(ii) Data demonstrating the success of the doctoral program to date in producing leaders in special education, early intervention, or related services such as: the professional accomplishments of program graduates (e.g.,

¹ For purposes of this priority, "high-need children with disabilities" refers to children or students (ages birth through 21, depending on the State) who are eligible for services under IDEA, and who may be at risk of educational failure or otherwise in need of special assistance or support because they: (1) are living in poverty, (2) are English learners, (3) are academically far below grade level, (4) have left school before receiving a regular high school diploma, (5) are at risk of not graduating with a regular high school diploma on time, (6) are homeless, (7) are in foster care, or (8) have been incarcerated.

public service, honors, or peer-reviewed publications (for Type A programs)) that demonstrate their leadership in special education, early intervention, or related services; the success of program graduates as educators of teachers, service providers, or administrators, including any results from evaluating the impact of those teachers, service providers, or administrators, on the outcomes of children with disabilities; the average amount of time it takes for program graduates to complete the program; the number of program graduates; and the percentage of program graduates finding employment directly related to their preparation.

Note: Data on the success of a doctoral program should be no older than five years prior to the start date of the project proposed in the application. When reporting percentages, the denominator (i.e., the total number of scholars or program graduates) must be provided.

(2) Scholar competencies to be acquired in the program relate to knowledge and skills needed by the leadership personnel the applicant proposes to prepare, including knowledge of technologies designed to provide instruction. To address this requirement, the applicant must--

(i) Identify the competencies needed by leadership personnel in postsecondary instruction, administration,

policy development, professional practice, leadership, or research in order to provide, prepare others to provide, or supervise the provision of effective interventions and services that improve outcomes for children with disabilities, including high-need children with disabilities; and

(ii) Provide the conceptual framework of the leadership preparation program, including any empirical support, that will promote the acquisition of the identified competencies needed by leadership personnel, including knowledge of technologies designed to provide instruction, and, where applicable, how these competencies relate to the project's specialized preparation area.

(b) Demonstrate, in the narrative section of the application under "Quality of the Project Services," how--

(1) The applicant will recruit and support high-quality scholars. The narrative must describe--

(i) The selection criteria the applicant will use to identify high-quality applicants for admission in the program;

(ii) The recruitment strategies the applicant will use to attract high-quality applicants and any specific recruitment strategies targeting high-quality applicants

from groups that are underrepresented in the teaching profession, including individuals with disabilities; and

(iii) The approach the applicant will use to help all scholars, including individuals with disabilities, complete the program; and

(2) The project is designed to promote the acquisition of the competencies needed by leadership personnel to provide, prepare others to provide, or supervise the provision of effective interventions and services that improve outcomes for children with disabilities, including high-need children with disabilities. These interventions should be applicable to children served in a variety of educational settings (e.g., public schools, including charter schools, or private schools) or early childhood and early intervention settings (e.g., home, community-based, Early Head Start and Head Start, child care, or public and private preschools), and the interventions and services must include those that promote literacy development, literacy skills, or other skills critical for college and today's careers. To address this requirement, the applicant must--

(i) Describe how the components of the project, such as coursework, internship experiences, research requirements, and other opportunities provided to scholars

to analyze data, critique research and methodologies, and practice newly acquired knowledge and skills, will enable the scholars to acquire the competencies needed by leadership personnel for postsecondary instruction, administration, policy development, professional practice, leadership, or research in special education, early intervention, or related services;

(ii) Describe how the components of the project are integrated in order to support the acquisition and enhancement of the identified competencies needed by leadership personnel in special education, early intervention, or related services, including knowledge of technologies designed to provide instruction;

(iii) Describe how the components of the project prepare scholars to provide, prepare others to provide, or supervise the provision of effective interventions and services that improve outcomes for children with disabilities, including high-need children with disabilities, in a variety of educational or early childhood and early intervention settings;

(iv) Demonstrate, through a letter of support from a partnering agency, school, or program, that it will provide

scholars with a high-quality internship experience in a high-need LEA;² a high-poverty school;³ a school identified for comprehensive support and improvement;⁴ a school implementing a targeted support and improvement plan⁵ for children with disabilities; an early childhood and early intervention program located within the geographical boundaries of a high-need LEA; or an early childhood and early intervention program located within the geographical boundaries of an LEA serving the highest percentage of schools identified for comprehensive support and

² For the purposes of this priority, the term "high-need LEA" means an LEA (a) that serves not fewer than 10,000 children from families with incomes below the poverty line; or (b) for which not less than 20 percent of the children served by the LEA are from families with incomes below the poverty line.

³ For the purposes of this priority, "high-poverty school" means a school in which at least 50 percent of students are from low-income families as determined using one of the measures of poverty specified under section 1113(a)(5) of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965, as amended (ESEA). For middle and high schools, eligibility may be calculated on the basis of comparable data from feeder schools. Eligibility as a high-poverty school is determined on the basis of the most currently available data.

⁴ For the purposes of this priority, the term "school identified for comprehensive support and improvement" means a statewide identified category of school that includes (a) not less than the lowest-performing five percent of all schools receiving funds under this part in the State; (b) all public high schools in the State failing to graduate one-third or more of their students; (c) public schools in the State described under section 1111(d)(3)(A)(i)(II) of the ESEA; and (d) at the discretion of the State, additional statewide categories of schools as defined in section 1111(c)(4)(D)(i) of the ESEA.

⁵ For the purposes of this priority, the term "schools implementing targeted support and improvement plans" means a school that has developed and is implementing a school-level targeted support and improvement plan to improve student outcomes based on the indicators in the statewide accountability system as defined in section 1111(d)(2) of the ESEA.

improvement or implementing targeted support and improvement plans in the State;

(v) Describe how the project will use resources, as appropriate, available through technical assistance centers, which may include centers funded by the Department;

(vi) Describe the approach that faculty members will use to mentor scholars with the goal of helping them acquire competencies needed by leadership personnel and advancing their careers in special education, early intervention, or related services; and

(vii) Describe how the components of the project, mentoring, and other project opportunities will promote the acquisition of scholars' critical leadership skills, including communication, networking, and collaboration.

(c) Demonstrate, in the narrative section of the application under "Quality of the Project Evaluation," how the applicant will--

(1) Evaluate how well the goals or objectives of the proposed leadership project have been met. The applicant must describe the outcomes to be measured for both the project and the scholars, particularly the acquisition of scholars' competencies and their impact on the services provided by future teachers, service providers, or

administrators; and the evaluation methodologies to be employed, including proposed instruments, data collection methods, and possible analyses;

(2) Collect, analyze, and use data on current scholars and scholars who graduate from the program to improve the proposed program on an ongoing basis; and

(3) Report the evaluation results to OSEP in the applicant's annual and final performance reports.

(d) Demonstrate, in the narrative under "Required Project Assurances" or appendices as directed, that the following program requirements are met. The applicant must--

(1) Include in appendix B to the application--

(i) Course syllabi for all coursework in the major and any required coursework for a minor;

(ii) Course syllabi for all research methods, evaluation methods, or data analysis courses required by the degree program and elective research methods, evaluation methods, or data analysis courses that have been completed by more than one scholar enrolled in the program in the last five years; and

(iii) For new coursework, proposed syllabi;

(2) Ensure that the proposed number of scholars to be recruited into the program can graduate from the program by

the end of the grant's project period. The described scholar recruitment strategies, including recruitment of individuals with disabilities, the program components and their sequence, and proposed budget must be consistent with this project requirement;

(3) Ensure scholars will not be selected based on race or national origin/ethnicity. Per the Supreme Court's decision in *Adarand Constructors, Inc. v. Peña*, 515 U.S. 200 (1995), the Department does not allow the selection of individuals on the basis of race or national origin/ethnicity. For this reason, grantees must ensure that any discussion of the recruitment of scholars based on race or national origin/ethnicity distinguishes between increasing the pool of applicants and actually selecting scholars;

(4) Ensure that the project will meet all requirements for grantees in disbursing scholarships as outlined in 34 CFR 304.23. Failure by a grantee to properly meet these requirements would be a violation of the grant award that could result in sanctions, including the grantee being liable for returning any misused funds to the Department. Specifically, before disbursement of scholarship assistance to an individual, a grantee must--

(i) Ensure that the scholar--

(A) Is a citizen or national of the United States;

(B) Is a permanent resident of--

(1) Puerto Rico, the United States Virgin Islands, Guam, American Samoa, or the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands; or

(2) The Republic of the Marshall Islands, the Federated States of Micronesia, or the Republic of Palau during the period in which these entities are eligible to receive an award under the Personnel Development to Improve Services and Results for Children with Disabilities program; or

(C) Provides evidence from the U.S. Department of Homeland Security that the individual is--

(1) A lawful permanent resident of the United States;

or

(2) In the United States for other than a temporary purpose with the intention of becoming a citizen or permanent resident;

(ii) Limit the cost of attendance portion of the scholarship assistance (as discussed in 34 CFR 304.21(a)) to the amount by which the individual's cost of attendance at the institution exceeds the amount of grant assistance the scholar is to receive for the same academic year under title IV of the HEA; and

(iii) Obtain a Certification of Eligibility for Federal Assistance from each scholar, as prescribed in 34 CFR 75.60, 75.61, and 75.62.

(5) Ensure that the project will meet the requirements in 34 CFR 304.23, particularly those related to informing all scholarship recipients of their service obligation commitment. Failure by a grantee to properly meet these requirements is a violation of the grant award that may result in sanctions, including the grantee being liable for returning any misused funds to the Department. Specifically, the grantee must prepare, and ensure that each scholarship recipient signs, the following two documents:

(i) A Pre-Scholarship Agreement prior to the scholar receiving a scholarship for an eligible program (Office of Management and Budget (OMB) Control Number 1820-0686); and

(ii) An Exit Certification immediately upon the scholar leaving, completing, or otherwise exiting that program (OMB Control Number 1820-0686);

(6) Ensure that prior approval from the OSEP project officer will be obtained before admitting additional scholars beyond the number of scholars proposed in the application and before transferring a scholar to another preparation program funded by OSEP;

(7) Ensure that the project will meet the statutory requirements in section 662(e) through (h) of IDEA;

(8) Ensure that at least 65 percent of the total requested budget over the five years will be used for scholar support;

(9) Ensure that the IHE will not require scholars enrolled in the program to work (e.g., as graduate assistants) as a condition of receiving support (e.g., tuition, stipends) from the proposed project, unless the work is specifically related to the acquisition of scholars' competencies and the requirements for completion of their personnel preparation program. This prohibition on work as a condition of receiving support does not apply to the service obligation requirements in section 662(h) of IDEA;

(10) Ensure that the budget includes attendance of the project director at a three-day project directors' meeting in Washington, DC, during each year of the project. The budget may also provide for the attendance of scholars at the same three-day project directors' meetings in Washington, DC;

(11) Ensure that the project director, key personnel, and scholars will actively participate in the cross-project collaboration, advanced trainings, and cross-site learning

opportunities (e.g., webinars, briefings) supported by OSEP. This network is intended to promote opportunities for participants to share resources and generate new knowledge by addressing topics of common interest to participants across projects including Department priorities and needs in the field;

(12) Ensure that if the project maintains a website, that it will be of high quality, with an easy-to-navigate design, that meets government or industry-recognized standards for accessibility;

(13) Ensure that scholar accomplishments (e.g., publications, awards) will be reported in annual and final performance reports; and

(14) Ensure that annual data will be submitted on each scholar who receives grant support (OMB Control Number 1820-0686). The primary purposes of the data collection are to track the service obligation fulfillment of scholars who receive funds from OSEP grants and to collect data for program performance measure reporting under the Government Performance and Results Act of 1993 (GPRA). Applicants are encouraged to visit the Personnel Development Program Data Collection System (DCS) website at <https://pdp.ed.gov/osep> for further information about this data collection requirement. Typically, data collection begins in January

of each year, and grantees are notified by email about the data collection period for their grant, although grantees may submit data as needed, year round. This data collection must be submitted electronically by the grantee and does not supplant the annual grant performance report required of each grantee for continuation funding (see 34 CFR 75.590). Data collection includes the submission of a signed, completed Pre-Scholarship Agreement and Exit Certification for each scholar funded under an OSEP grant (see paragraph (4) of this section, subparagraphs (i) and (ii)).

Absolute Priority 2--Promoting Innovation and Efficiency, Streamlining Education with an Increased Focus on Improving Student Outcomes, and Providing Increased Value to Students and Taxpayers.

Background:

The Department seeks to encourage grantees to leverage sources of support that may exist for their activities, beyond what is provided by the Department. Therefore, we have included an absolute priority for matching support through non-Federal contributions, either in cash or in-kind donations. Although the cash or in-kind resources to be contributed must be at least 10 percent of the total grant award, we encourage a higher percentage through the

competitive preference priority included within this absolute priority.

Applicants must address this absolute priority, and the competitive preference priority, if applicable, in the budget information (ED Form 524, Section B) and budget narrative. The applicant must propose the amount of cash or in-kind resources to be contributed for each year of the grant.

Priority:

Projects that are designed to demonstrate matching support⁶ for the proposed project at 10 percent of the total amount of the grant.

Competitive Preference Priority: Within this absolute priority, we give competitive preference to applications that address the following priority. Under 34 CFR 75.105(c)(2)(i) we award an additional one point to an application that meets paragraph (i) of the competitive preference priority and an additional two points to an

⁶ For the purposes of this priority, matching support can be either cash or in-kind donations. According to 2 CFR 200.306, a cash expenditure or outlay of cash with respect to the matching budget by the grantee is considered a cash contribution. Certain cash contributions that the organization normally considers an indirect cost should not be counted as a direct cost for the purposes of meeting matching support. According to 2 CFR 200.434, third-party in-kind contributions are services or property (e.g., land, buildings, equipment, materials, supplies), that are contributed by a non-Federal third-party at no charge to the grantee.

application that meets paragraph (ii) of the competitive preference priority.

This priority is:

Projects that are designed to demonstrate matching support for the proposed projects:

(i) 50 percent of the total amount of the grant (1 point); or

(ii) 100 percent of the total amount of the grant (2 points).

References:

Billingsley, B. S., Crockett, J., & Kamman, M. L. (2014).

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Smith, D. D., Montrosse, B. E., Robb, S. M., Tyler, N. C., & Young, C. (2011). Assessing trends in leadership: Special education's capacity to produce a highly qualified workforce. Claremont, CA: IRIS@CGU, Claremont Graduate University.

Smith, D. D., Robb, S. M., West, J., & Tyler, N. C. (2010). The changing education landscape: How

special education leadership preparation can make a difference for teachers and their students with disabilities. Teacher Education and Special Education, 33, 25-43.

West, J. E., & Hardman, H. L. (2012). Averting current and future special education faculty shortages: Policy implications and recommendations. Teacher Education and Special Education, 35, 154-160.

Woods, J., & Snyder, P. (2009). Interdisciplinary doctoral leadership training in early intervention. Infants & Young Children, 22(1), 32-34.

Waiver of Proposed Rulemaking: Under the Administrative Procedure Act (APA) (5 U.S.C. 553) the Department generally offers interested parties the opportunity to comment on proposed priorities and requirements. Section 681(d) of IDEA, however, makes the public comment requirements of the APA inapplicable to the priority in this notice.

Program Authority: 20 U.S.C. 1462 and 1481.

Applicable Regulations: (a) The Education Department General Administrative Regulations in 34 CFR parts 75, 77, 79, 81, 82, 84, 86, 97, 98, and 99. (b) The Office of Management and Budget Guidelines to Agencies on Governmentwide Debarment and Suspension (Nonprocurement) in 2 CFR part 180, as adopted and amended as regulations of

the Department in 2 CFR part 3485. (c) The Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards in 2 CFR part 200, as adopted and amended as regulations of the Department in 2 CFR part 3474. (d) The regulations for this program in 34 CFR part 304.

Note: The regulations in 34 CFR part 86 apply to IHEs only.

II. Award Information

Type of Award: Discretionary grants.

Estimated Available Funds: \$4,250,000.

Contingent upon the availability of funds and the quality of applications, we may make additional awards in FY 2019 from the list of unfunded applications from this competition.

Estimated Range of Awards: \$225,000-\$250,000 per year.

Estimated Average Size of Awards: \$237,500 per year.

Maximum Award: We will not make an award exceeding \$250,000 for a single budget period of 12 months.

Estimated Number of Awards: 17.

Note: The Department is not bound by any estimates in this notice.

Project Period: Up to 60 months.

III. Eligibility Information

1. Eligible Applicants: IHEs, private nonprofit organizations.

2. Cost Sharing or Matching: Cost sharing or matching is required for this competition. See Absolute Priority 2.

3. Subgrantees: Under 34 CFR 75.708(b) and (c) a grantee under this competition may award subgrants--to directly carry out project activities described in its application--to the following types of entities: IHEs and private nonprofit organizations suitable to carry out the activities proposed in the application. The grantee may award subgrants to entities it has identified in an approved application.

4. Other General Requirements: (a) Recipients of funding under this competition must make positive efforts to employ and advance in employment qualified individuals with disabilities (see section 606 of IDEA).

(b) Applicants for, and recipients of, funding must, with respect to the aspects of their proposed project relating to the absolute priority, involve individuals with disabilities, or parents of individuals with disabilities ages birth through 26, in planning, implementing, and evaluating the project (see section 682(a)(1)(A) of IDEA).

IV. Application and Submission Information

1. Application Submission Instructions: For information on how to submit an application please refer to our Common Instructions for Applicants to Department of Education Discretionary Grant Programs, published in the *Federal Register* on February 12, 2018 (83 FR 6003) and available at www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/FR-2018-02-12/pdf/2018-02558.pdf.

2. Intergovernmental Review: This competition is subject to Executive Order 12372 and the regulations in 34 CFR part 79. Information about Intergovernmental Review of Federal Programs under Executive Order 12372 is in the application package for this competition.

3. Funding Restrictions: We reference regulations outlining funding restrictions in the Applicable Regulations section of this notice.

4. Recommended Page Limit: The application narrative (Part III of the application) is where you, the applicant, address the selection criteria that reviewers use to evaluate your application. We recommend that you (1) limit the application narrative to no more than 50 pages and (2) use the following standards:

- A "page" is 8.5" x 11", on one side only, with 1" margins at the top, bottom, and both sides.

- Double-space (no more than three lines per vertical inch) all text in the application narrative, including titles, headings, footnotes, quotations, reference citations, and captions, as well as all text in charts, tables, figures, graphs, and screen shots.

- Use a font that is 12 point or larger.

- Use one of the following fonts: Times New Roman, Courier, Courier New, or Arial.

The recommended page limit does not apply to Part I, the cover sheet; Part II, the budget section, including the narrative budget justification; Part IV, the assurances and certifications; or the abstract (follow the guidance provided in the application package for completing the abstract), the table of contents, the list of priority requirements, the resumes, the reference list, the letters of support, or the appendices. However, the recommended page limit does apply to all of the application narrative, including all text in charts, tables, figures, graphs, and screen shots.

V. Application Review Information

1. Selection Criteria: The selection criteria for this competition are from 34 CFR 75.210 and are as follows:

(a) Significance of the Project (10 points).

(1) The Secretary considers the significance of the proposed project.

(2) In determining the significance of the proposed project, the Secretary considers the following factors:

(i) The extent to which the proposed project will prepare personnel for fields in which shortages have been demonstrated;

(ii) The importance or magnitude of the results or outcomes likely to be attained by the proposed project; and

(iii) The extent to which there is a conceptual framework underlying the proposed research or demonstration activities and the quality of that framework.

(b) Quality of Project Services (45 points).

(1) The Secretary considers the quality of the services to be provided by the proposed project.

(2) In determining the quality of the services to be provided by the proposed project, the Secretary considers the quality and sufficiency of strategies for ensuring equal access and treatment for eligible project participants who are members of groups that have traditionally been underrepresented based on race, color, national origin, gender, age, or disability.

(3) In addition, the Secretary considers the following factors:

(i) The extent to which the training or professional development services to be provided by the proposed project are of sufficient quality, intensity, and duration to lead to improvements in practice among the recipients of those services;

(ii) The extent to which the proposed activities constitute a coherent, sustained program of training in the field; and

(iii) The extent to which the services to be provided by the proposed project reflect up-to-date knowledge from research and effective practice.

(c) Quality of Project Evaluation (25 points).

(1) The Secretary considers the quality of the evaluation to be conducted of the proposed project.

(2) In determining the quality of the evaluation, the Secretary considers the following factors:

(i) The extent to which the methods of evaluation are thorough, feasible, and appropriate to the goals, objectives, and outcomes of the proposed project;

(ii) The extent to which the goals, objectives, and outcomes to be achieved by the proposed project are clearly specified and measurable;

(iii) The extent to which the methods of evaluation include the use of objective performance measures that are

clearly related to the intended outcomes of the project and will produce quantitative and qualitative data to the extent possible; and

(iv) The extent to which the methods of evaluation will provide timely guidance for quality assurance.

(d) Quality of Management Plan and Resources (20 points).

(1) The Secretary considers the quality of the management plan and the adequacy of resources for the proposed project.

(2) In determining the quality of the management plan and the adequacy of resources, the Secretary considers the following factors:

(i) The qualifications, including relevant training and experience, of key project personnel;

(ii) The adequacy of the management plan to achieve the objectives of the proposed project on time and within budget, including clearly defined responsibilities, timelines, and milestones for accomplishing project tasks;

(iii) The extent to which the time commitments of the project director and principal investigator and other key project personnel are appropriate and adequate to meet the objectives of the proposed project;

(iv) The adequacy of support, including facilities, equipment, supplies, and other resources, from the applicant organization or the lead applicant organization; and

(v) The extent to which the budget is adequate to support the proposed project.

2. Review and Selection Process: We remind potential applicants that in reviewing applications in any discretionary grant competition, the Secretary may consider, under 34 CFR 75.217(d)(3), the past performance of the applicant in carrying out a previous award, such as the applicant's use of funds, achievement of project objectives, and compliance with grant conditions. The Secretary may also consider whether the applicant failed to submit a timely performance report or submitted a report of unacceptable quality.

In addition, in making a competitive grant award, the Secretary requires various assurances, including those applicable to Federal civil rights laws that prohibit discrimination in programs or activities receiving Federal financial assistance from the Department of Education (34 CFR 100.4, 104.5, 106.4, 108.8, and 110.23).

3. Additional Review and Selection Process Factors: In the past, the Department has had difficulty finding peer

reviewers for certain competitions because so many individuals who are eligible to serve as peer reviewers have conflicts of interest. The standing panel requirements under section 682(b) of IDEA also have placed additional constraints on the availability of reviewers. Therefore, the Department has determined that for some discretionary grant competitions, applications may be separated into two or more groups and ranked and selected for funding within specific groups. This procedure will make it easier for the Department to find peer reviewers by ensuring that greater numbers of individuals who are eligible to serve as reviewers for any particular group of applicants will not have conflicts of interest. It also will increase the quality, independence, and fairness of the review process, while permitting panel members to review applications under discretionary grant competitions for which they also have submitted applications.

4. Risk Assessment and Specific Conditions:

Consistent with 2 CFR 200.205, before awarding grants under this competition the Department conducts a review of the risks posed by applicants. Under 2 CFR 3474.10, the Secretary may impose specific conditions and, in appropriate circumstances, high-risk conditions on a grant if the applicant or grantee is not financially stable; has

a history of unsatisfactory performance; has a financial or other management system that does not meet the standards in 2 CFR part 200, subpart D; has not fulfilled the conditions of a prior grant; or is otherwise not responsible.

5. Integrity and Performance System: If you are selected under this competition to receive an award that over the course of the project period may exceed the simplified acquisition threshold (currently \$150,000), under 2 CFR 200.205(a)(2) we must make a judgment about your integrity, business ethics, and record of performance under Federal awards--that is, the risk posed by you as an applicant--before we make an award. In doing so, we must consider any information about you that is in the integrity and performance system (currently referred to as the Federal Awardee Performance and Integrity Information System (FAPIIS)), accessible through the System for Award Management. You may review and comment on any information about yourself that a Federal agency previously entered and that is currently in FAPIIS.

Please note that, if the total value of your currently active grants, cooperative agreements, and procurement contracts from the Federal Government exceeds \$10,000,000, the reporting requirements in 2 CFR part 200, Appendix XII, require you to report certain integrity information to

FAPIIS semiannually. Please review the requirements in 2 CFR part 200, Appendix XII, if this grant plus all the other Federal funds you receive exceed \$10,000,000.

VI. Award Administration Information

1. Award Notices: If your application is successful, we notify your U.S. Representative and U.S. Senators and send you a Grant Award Notification (GAN); or we may send you an email containing a link to access an electronic version of your GAN. We may notify you informally, also.

If your application is not evaluated or not selected for funding, we notify you.

2. Administrative and National Policy Requirements: We identify administrative and national policy requirements in the application package and reference these and other requirements in the Applicable Regulations section of this notice.

We reference the regulations outlining the terms and conditions of an award in the Applicable Regulations section of this notice and include these and other specific conditions in the GAN. The GAN also incorporates your approved application as part of your binding commitments under the grant.

3. Open Licensing Requirements: Unless an exception applies, if you are awarded a grant under this competition,

you will be required to openly license to the public grant deliverables created in whole, or in part, with Department grant funds. When the deliverable consists of modifications to pre-existing works, the license extends only to those modifications that can be separately identified and only to the extent that open licensing is permitted under the terms of any licenses or other legal restrictions on the use of pre-existing works. Additionally, a grantee or subgrantee that is awarded competitive grant funds must have a plan to disseminate these public grant deliverables. This dissemination plan can be developed and submitted after your application has been reviewed and selected for funding. For additional information on the open licensing requirements please refer to 2 CFR 3474.20.

4. Reporting: (a) If you apply for a grant under this competition, you must ensure that you have in place the necessary processes and systems to comply with the reporting requirements in 2 CFR part 170 should you receive funding under the competition. This does not apply if you have an exception under 2 CFR 170.110(b).

(b) At the end of your project period, you must submit a final performance report, including financial information, as directed by the Secretary. If you receive

a multiyear award, you must submit an annual performance report that provides the most current performance and financial expenditure information as directed by the Secretary under 34 CFR 75.118. The Secretary may also require more frequent performance reports under 34 CFR 75.720(c). For specific requirements on reporting, please go to www.ed.gov/fund/grant/apply/appforms/appforms.html.

5. Performance Measures: Under GPRA, the Department has established a set of performance measures, including long-term measures, that are designed to yield information on the quality of the Personnel Development to Improve Services and Results for Children with Disabilities program. These measures include: (1) the percentage of preparation programs that incorporate scientifically or evidence-based practices into their curricula; (2) the percentage of scholars completing preparation programs who are knowledgeable and skilled in evidence-based practices for children with disabilities; (3) the percentage of scholars who exit preparation programs prior to completion due to poor academic performance; (4) the percentage of scholars completing preparation programs who are working in the area(s) in which they were prepared upon program completion; and (5) the Federal cost per scholar who completed the preparation program.

In addition, the Department will gather information on the following outcome measures: (1) the percentage of scholars who completed the preparation program and are employed in high-need districts; (2) the percentage of scholars who completed the preparation program and are employed in the field of special education for at least two years; and (3) the percentage of scholars who completed the preparation program and who are rated effective by their employers.

Grantees may be asked to participate in assessing and providing information on these aspects of program quality.

6. Continuation Awards: In making a continuation award under 34 CFR 75.253, the Secretary considers, among other things: whether a grantee has made substantial progress in achieving the goals and objectives of the project; whether the grantee has expended funds in a manner that is consistent with its approved application and budget; and, if the Secretary has established performance measurement requirements, the performance targets in the grantee's approved application.

In making a continuation award, the Secretary also considers whether the grantee is operating in compliance with the assurances in its approved application, including those applicable to Federal civil rights laws that prohibit

discrimination in programs or activities receiving Federal financial assistance from the Department (34 CFR 100.4, 104.5, 106.4, 108.8, and 110.23).

VII. Other Information

Accessible Format: Individuals with disabilities can obtain this document and a copy of the application package in an accessible format (e.g., braille, large print, audiotape, or compact disc) by contacting the Management Support Services Team, U.S. Department of Education, 400 Maryland Avenue, SW., room 5113, Potomac Center Plaza, Washington, DC 20202-2500. Telephone: (202) 245-7363. If you use a TDD or a TTY, call the FRS, toll free, at 1-800-877-8339.

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Dated: June 8, 2018.

Johnny W. Collett,
*Assistant Secretary for Special
Education and Rehabilitative
Services.*

[FR Doc. 2018-12717 Filed: 6/12/2018 8:45 am; Publication Date: 6/13/2018]